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**Andrew Hardyway**

Game Recap: Men's Soccer | 11/5/2016 10:48:00 PM

## Eagles Claim First Sun Belt Conference Championship with 3-1 Win Over App State

### *GS and Coastal Carolina named Co-Regular-Season Conference Champions*

**STATESBORO** – The Georgia Southern men's soccer team sent its three seniors out in fine fashion Saturday night as the Eagles defeated long-time rival Appalachian State 3-1 and claimed a share of the regular season Sun Belt Conference title. The game against the Mountaineers served as the Eagles' Senior Night with the Eagles recognizing three graduating players – [Chris MacMurray](#), [Aidan Reising](#) and [Jeremy Rector](#) – prior to the game.

In the 30<sup>th</sup> minute, Rector fittingly put the Eagles up 1-0 when he scored his second goal of the season off a feed from [Adam Abdellaoui](#). Not to be out-down by his fellow senior, Reising then gave the Eagles a little breathing room nearly three minutes later with an unassisted goal of his own that came off a deflected shot. Redshirt freshman [David](#)

Rhoades closed out the Eagles' scoring with a goal in the 59<sup>th</sup> minute off a feed from junior Nick Wells. App State was able to get a goal back in the 69<sup>th</sup> minute when Keegan Tanaka took a deflected ball and put it into the net.

Georgia Southern ends the year 3-1-1 in Sun Belt Conference action, marking the best league record for the Eagles in a decade. The Eagles finish the regular season tied with Coastal Carolina atop the standings with 10 points each and identical 3-1-1 league records. It is the first conference title for the men's soccer program.

### **MATCH FACTS**

App State (5-8-4) – 1

Georgia Southern (8-7-3) – 3

### **SCORING SUMMARY**

30' – GS – Jeremy Rector (2), assisted by Adam Abdellaoui – Abdellaoui chip shot across the box, Rector cleaned up with a well-placed ball across the goal into the bottom right of the net

33' – GS – Aidan Reising (1), unassisted – Abdellaoui had a shot blocked, ball was played around in the box before Reising corralled it in and scored

59' – GS – David Rhoades (2) assisted by Nick wells – Wells played the ball into the box with Rhoades finishing to lower left corner of net

69' – APP – Keegan Tanaka (1), unassisted – ball bounced around the box before Tanaka collected and put it into the upper left of the net

### **NOTES**

- Georgia Southern is now 14-15-1 all-time against App State, including 7-5 in Statesboro. The Eagles have won the last four meetings between the two programs and have earned a positive result in five consecutive games against the Mountaineers dating back to the 2012 season.

- Saturday night's 3-1 victory was the largest margin of victory in the series since the Eagles won 2-0 in Boone, N.C., on during the 2006 regular-season.

- With Saturday night's 3-1 victory and a 2-1 win by Coastal Carolina over Georgia State in Conway, S.C., the Eagles finish the season tied with the Chanticleers in the regular-season standings, but CCU takes the top seed in the upcoming Sun Belt Conference Championship based off a tie breaker scenario. Both the Chants and Eagles ended the year with 10 points and the two programs worked to a scoreless draw on Oct. 15, but CCU ended Sun Belt Conference play with a goal differential ratio of 2.0 compared to the Eagles' 1.6.

- After finishing the regular-season tied atop the league standings, Georgia Southern has earned a bye in the first round of the Sun Belt Conference Championships which will be hosted by Georgia State in Atlanta next week. It is the third straight year GS has earned a first-round bye in the conference tournament.

- Georgia Southern's 3-1-1 (.700) record in conference action is the best league mark for the Eagles since the 2006 season. That year, GS went 4-1-2 (.714) in the SoCon and finished the year second in the league standings.

- Redshirt freshman Torgeir Fjaer is now 6-5-3 on the year.

- [Aidan Reising](#)'s goal in the 33<sup>rd</sup> minute proved to be the game-winner for the Eagles Saturday night. It is the second game-winning goal in his career.
- With his second goal of the season in the 30<sup>th</sup> minute, [Jeremy Rector](#) has now scored multiple goals in all four seasons he has played for Georgia Southern. Rector scored three goals in each of his first three seasons and has two goals so far this year.

### **QUOTE FROM COACH JOHN MURPHY**

#### *On ending the season with a 3-1 win over rival App State on Senior Night*

"I thought it was a great performance by our entire team and to end the season on a high note like this with Senior Night, it just adds to it. But the overall performance, with the exception of conceding the goal, it was a pretty comprehensive effort on our part. I was impressed with Appalachian State and their appetite for work matches ours as they certainly didn't make it easy. We had a good grip of things and created quite a number of chances while limiting theirs. Conceding the way we did was a bit frustrating, but we're so open going forward and so committed in our attack that sometimes it leaves us a bit open and vulnerable. With a young team we just have to find that balance of attacking properly while still having the shape to avoid being exposed the way that we did."

#### *On being co-conference regular-season champions*

"It's always nice to earn something like this and congratulations to Coastal Carolina as well. There wasn't much that separated us when we played them out in Conway, so perhaps it's appropriate for us to share the championship. They did what they had to do to get the one-seed, so congratulations to them on that. But the important thing is we are one of the top two seeds and get the bye into the semifinal round. When you're playing so many games in a short amount of time, we're not going to take anything for granted. We'll take a look at the bracket, get some clarification on who we could possibly play, set some new post-season goals and get ourselves prepared for a semifinal game on Friday. That's exciting and a lot of things are in play for us. We haven't taken anything for granted all year and I think the record over the season shows that we were amongst the best teams in the conference and I think it's a great credit to our players and our coaching staff."

### **NEXT UP**

Georgia Southern will now prepare to play in the Sun Belt Conference Championships held in Atlanta and hosted by Georgia State next week. The tournament will run from Thursday, Nov. 10, through Sunday, Nov. 13. The Eagles earned a bye from the first round and will play on Friday, Nov. 11. The Eagles will play the winner of the first-round matchup between No. 6 Howard and No. 3 Georgia State.

### ***From the Sun Belt Conference Office***

**Men's Soccer Championship bracket announced, Coastal Carolina earns top seed**  
**NEW ORLEANS** – Coastal Carolina locked up the top seed for the 2016 Sun Belt Men's Soccer Championship with a 2-1 win in overtime against Georgia State on Saturday night. The Chanticleers are the top seed in their first ever Sun Belt men's

soccer tournament.

With the No. 1 seed, the Chanticleers (7-6-3, 3-1-1) earned a bye to the semifinals of the tournament along with No. 2 seed Georgia Southern (8-7-3, 3-1-1). The Chanticleers and Eagles finished tied atop the standings at 10 points apiece to share the regular-season crown, but the Chanticleers earned the No. 1 seed after a two-team tiebreaker was won by CCU. The two teams tied in the regular season, meaning the tie would be settled based on the goal differential ratio of the two teams during conference matches. CCU's ratio (6 goals for, 3 goals against, 2.0 ratio) bested Georgia Southern's (8 goals for, 5 goals against, 1.6 ratio) to award the Chanticleers the top seed.

The Eagles capped their regular season with a 3-1 win against rival Appalachian State on Saturday night. With the top two seeds, Coastal Carolina and Georgia Southern both earned first round byes in the postseason tournament, a third consecutive first-round bye for the Eagles.

Both teams will await the results of the first round games in the six-team tournament that begins on Thursday, Nov. 10, from the GSU Soccer Complex in Atlanta, Ga. The first match at 3 p.m. ET features No. 4 Hartwick (8-5-4, 2-2-1) against No. 5 seed Appalachian State (5-8-4, 1-3-1). The winner will advance to take on Coastal Carolina on Friday, Nov. 11 at 3 p.m. ET.

The nightcap on the first day of the tournament will pit No. 3 seed Georgia State (12-7-0, 3-2-0) against No. 6 seed Howard (2-14-3, 1-4-0). The match is scheduled for a 6:30 p.m. ET first touch, with the winner advancing to Friday night's 6:30 p.m. ET semifinal match against Georgia Southern. As the host institution, Georgia State has the right to choose the start time of its first match of the tournament and elected to play the later match in the first round.

All quarterfinal and semifinal matches will be carried live by the Sun Belt Digital Network and will be available for viewing on SunBeltSports.org free of charge.

The championship match of the tournament is set for 1 p.m. ET on Sunday, Nov. 13 and will be broadcasted by ESPN3 and available on the WatchESPN app.

### **Men's Soccer Championship seeds**

1. Coastal Carolina – 10 points (3-1-1)\*
2. Georgia Southern – 10 points (3-1-1)\*
3. Georgia State – 9 points (3-2-0)
4. Hartwick – 7 points (2-2-1)
5. Appalachian State – 4 points (1-3-1)
6. Howard – 3 points (1-4-0)

### **Men's Soccer Championship schedule**

#### **Thursday, Nov. 10**

Match 1: No. 4 Hartwick vs. No. 5 Appalachian State – 3 p.m. ET

Match 2: No. 3 Georgia State vs. No. 6 Howard – 6:30 p.m. ET

**Friday, Nov. 11**

Match 3: No. 1 Coastal Carolina vs. Winner Match 1 – 3 p.m. ET

Match 4: No. 2 Georgia Southern vs. Winner Match 2 – 6:30 p.m. ET

**Sunday, Nov. 13**

Championship Match: Winner Match 3 vs. Winner Match 4 – 1 p.m. ET

*Georgia Southern Athletics provides up-to-date information on all its sports through its official website, [GSEagles.com](http://GSEagles.com), through social media channels [facebook.com/GSAthletics](https://facebook.com/GSAthletics), [twitter.com/GSAthletics](https://twitter.com/GSAthletics), iOS app Georgia Southern Eagles and Android app Eagles GATA. Fans can purchase tickets to Georgia Southern Athletics events by visiting [GSEagles.com/Tickets](http://GSEagles.com/Tickets).*

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